blackish colour, by the absence of visible wings, and by the broad basal flange on each branch of the male forceps. In the key to species of *Skalistes* in Brindle (1970) it keys down to *vara* (Scudder); the key may be amended as follows:—

8. Elytra short, wings absent or concealed 8a
— Elytra longer, wings usually visible 9
8a Reddish to dark brown, male forceps undulate from a side view and branches without a basal flange; smaller, body length 7-9·5 mm., forceps (males) 3-3·5 mm ..... *vara* (Scudder)
— Blackish; male forceps not undulate from a side view, and branches with a basal flange; larger, body length 10-12 mm., forceps 4·5-6 mm (males) ..... *lucasi* sp.n.

S. lucasi is also related to *S. smithi* (Bormans) and *S. linsleyi* Brindle, in which the wings are sometimes also just visible; these species are much paler in colour, and each branch of the male forceps have a much smaller basal projection, consisting of a tooth or a double-toothed process.

REFERENCE

Brindle, A. (1970). A preliminary revision of the genus *Skalistes* Burr (Dermaptera: Forficulidae). *Entomologist*, **103**: 217-228.

Refridgeration—A Valuable Adjunct to Usual Relaxing Methods used by Lepidopterists

By D. M. Kroon

Accepted methods for relaxation and setting of Lepidoptera are both tedious and time-consuming coupled with certain disadvantages. After successful collecting safaris this sometimes poses serious time problems. Certain families relax with difficulty despite various treatments with concentrated ammonia, boiling water or specially prepared relaxing fluids. Discolouration of subtler shades of green is common while Pieridae, especially whites and yellows, develop green blotches on the wings. Fungal growth has been largely overcome by the addition of weak solutions of phenol, carbolic acid, or thiomersalol to the relaxing tin.

These problems *CAN be obviated*! As an effective and highly satisfactory alternative I have been using deep refridgeration of all freshly caught specimens. The properly labelled specimens are packed in airtight plastic containers and placed in the deep-freeze soon after demise, or even later for larger specimens. Because cyanide killing jars tend to dehydrate small specimens rapidly, these are placed in another container after demise, and packed later properly prior to freezing. Small or large specimens are equally well preserved for subsequent mounting, with incomparable preservation of the true wing colours. After removal from the deep-freeze small specimens can be set almost immediately, while larger

specimens take a little longer to thaw. The utmost pliability for setting is retained though *rigor mortis* which develops in some specimens may first have to pass off.

ADVANTAGES:

1) Elimination of the disadvantages listed above.
2) Time-saving in the field, where every minute is precious.
3) Cumbersome, and often heavy, setting boards and carrying cases can be left at home.
4) Prevents possible spoiling of valuable material by dust, mechanical forces or the ingress of Dermestidae or ants during long veld stays.
5) Traditionally difficult relaxers such as Hesperiidae are in a profound state of relaxation and ready for setting even months later.
6) Engorged Charaxes can be frozen and their abdomens treated in the desired manner on thawing with greater ease at home than in the field.
7) The filiform antennae of many moths do not curl to the same extent as dried specimens set later after relaxing.
8) Pinning of extreme micros should still be effected in the field, but require shorter relaxing periods if dealt with in the above manner. The plumes and fringes are partially splayed before freezing as these are always affected by relaxing when they tend to mass and stick together detracting from their real beauty.

APPARATUS:

Reasonably priced small lightweight portable deepfreezers are commercially available operating on AC/DC electricity, from batteries or gas, or combinations of above. For the casual collector with a caravan, the deepfreeze compartment usually suffices. Transport of specimens for periods up to twenty-four hours can be satisfactorily effected by packing the frozen containers in lightweight polystyrene boxes packed with ice. Once back home I replace the now partially thawed specimens into the deepfreeze. A few specimens are removed and set at a time which is convenient, with excellent results and without the bother of resorting to relaxing tins.

In conclusion I would urge collectors to put this useful adjunct to the trial, as means of temporarily storing specimens prior to setting, and so avoiding the relaxing tin with its inherent disadvantages.

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HERSE CONVOLVULI L. IN KENT.—On Saturday, 10th November 1973, a boy brought to me a live male *Herse convolvuli* in excellent condition. He found the insect sitting on a shop in Red Lodge Road, West Wickham. — JAMIESON C. LITTLE, 70 Langley Way, West Wickham, Kent. BR4 ODR. 18.xi.1973.